

Canadian Dimension editorial board statement on the resignations of Dimitri Lascaris, Radhika Desai and Alan Freeman

Sunday 14 April 2024, by [CANADIAN DIMENSION Editorial Board](#), [GONICK Cy](#), [GRAHAM Paul S.](#) (Date first published: 5 April 2021).

This is a statement by a majority of the members of the Canadian Dimension editorial board regarding the resignations of three members last month. A dissenting view by CD founder Cy Gonick is also published here, followed by an addendum composed by longtime CD editorial collective member Paul S. Graham.

The three individuals who publicized their recent resignations from *Canadian Dimension's* editorial board made the decision to leave the board of their own accord following a protracted internal debate on the merits of republishing several articles which minimized or denied Chinese state persecution of the Uighurs in Xinjiang, as well as an article that discounted the existence of popular opposition to Putin in Russia.

When the articles in question were rejected, CD had already published a [number of pieces](#) touching on the issue of the Uighurs and Chinese state imperialism from a distinctly pro-Chinese perspective. The majority of the members of the board felt that we could not in good conscience provide an unlimited forum for the viewpoints expressed in these syndicated pieces. We believed and continue to believe that any appearance of an alignment by CD with the inverted Cold War mentality characteristic of “campism” [1] and its accompanying apologies for authoritarian regimes which, moreover, no longer have any connection to socialism as we understand it, would do irreparable harm to the reputation of our publication as a beacon of the independent radical left in Canada.

While CD has an historic and ongoing commitment to pluralism on the left, it is the role of an editorial board to select pieces for publication which meet certain standards of journalistic integrity and represent the best of left thought. Lines must inevitably be drawn. We do not regret drawing them at the dismissal of legitimate struggles of oppressed workers and national minorities whether in China, Russia, Syria, or anywhere else, on the unstated pretext that “the enemy of my enemy is my friend.” This is not a viable foundation for a left politics and only serves to undermine the credibility of the left among working people.

Furthermore, the characterization of [David Mandel's article on Alexei Navalny](#) in the resignation letter is a deliberate fabrication that slanders the author, a well-known left scholar and activist, and misrepresents his arguments. In no way, shape or form is it an article voicing support for Navalny. Quite the opposite: it invites readers to interrogate Navalny's “social turn” and underscores the deep distrust with which he is viewed by many Russian people.

Canadian Dimension has survived for more than half a century because it has held true to its *raison d'être*: to serve as an independent forum for left-wing political thought and discussion, not a mouthpiece for sectarianism that provides cover for human rights abuses—even when those abuses

are weaponized by Western states to wage an economic and propaganda war against an “official enemy.” We will continue to expose and denounce the hypocrisy of governments in the Global North, including our own, which selectively condemn human rights abuses for their own political purposes. It is a self-serving double standard that allows the Liberal government of Justin Trudeau to impose sanctions on China while selling military equipment to Saudi Arabia.

But the mendaciousness of the United States and its allies does not give a pass to the authoritarian governments they purport to condemn. Our duty of solidarity lies always and everywhere with resistance to repression on the part of the working class, women and oppressed minorities.

—Sean Carleton, André Frappier, Krishna Lalbiharie, Andrea Levy, Harrison Samphir, and Kim Wilson, *Canadian Dimension* editorial board

This is my response to the [announcement](#) that three prominent writers—Dimitri Lascaris, Radhika Desai and Alan Freeman—have recently resigned from the editorial board of the online magazine *Canadian Dimension*. It is important to note that this is my personal response, not the response of the editorial board. Though I was the founder of the magazine some 58 years ago and have been its publisher most years since, I was not part of the majority that rejected the articles causing the resignation of the three editors. In fact, I personally invited them to join the board because I felt they had important contributions to make, including articles they would write and solicit. Dimitri has just run a spectacular campaign as an ecosocialist candidate for the leadership of the Green Party—and almost won! Radhika and Alan have outstanding careers as socialist intellectuals with worldwide reputations. As for the particular articles in question I was in favour of their being published—not because I agreed with everything in them or with what they chose to omit—I did not. But historically, full agreement by CD editors has never been the basis upon which decisions were made to publish or not. That required only that articles addressed important issues for the left and presented information otherwise unavailable or not widely available.

The left, including the far left, here as everywhere, has always been riddled with division—too often with extremely negative outcomes. The founders of *Dimension* were aware of that danger and with no little difficulty managed for the most part to carry on without splitting the magazine into warring factions and causing bitter resignations. Not that there have not been serious differences of opinion among editors and leading authors. Personally, I have mostly enjoyed the vigorous debates in CD through the years and I am convinced that publishing controversial material from differing perspectives remains the best policy going forward. I have to add that for the most part the current editors of CD should be credited for remaining true to this policy, this most recent experience notwithstanding. Finally, I give notice on this, my 85th birthday, that I intend to fight for a continued CD policy of pluralism within the left and the highest feasible level of diversity.

—Cy Gonick, founding publisher, *Canadian Dimension*

I wish to endorse the position expressed by Cy Gonick with respect to the resignations of Dimitri Lascaris, Radhika Desai and Alan Freeman from *Canadian Dimension's* editorial board. Given their outstanding records as intellectuals and political activists, their departure constitutes a significant loss to CD, its readers and, in fact, the remaining editors. In the years to come, I hope that future editors of *Canadian Dimension* will come to understand the necessity and the benefits of publishing a diversity of views, even those with which they disagree.

—Paul S. Graham, member, *Canadian Dimension* editorial board

Canadian Dimension editorial board

Cy Gonick

Paul Graham

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P.S.

The Canadian Dimension

<https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/cd-editorial-board-statement-on-the-resignations>

Footnotes

[1] Campism is a view of the world as divided into two hostile forces, one bloc led by the United States and consisting of the countries of the Global North along with a select number of allies such as Israel and Saudi Arabia, and the other led by China and Russia, and encompassing the countries of the Global South. In this binary conception, anti-imperialism is understood to require uncritical support for the latter bloc.